

PTI Strategic Plan Development

The PTI Board and team are in the final processes of developing the organization's first strategic plan. In recent months, a draft was put for public comment and PTI held webinars with the community to discuss the plan and gather input. The staff report distilling the submissions is available at <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/report-comments-draft-pti-fy21-24-strategic-plan-16jun20-en.pdf>. No substantial changes were proposed in the comments, but a number of small changes have been applied in response to the feedback. The PTI Board will be considering the plan for adoption at its next meeting, scheduled for 30 June.

SLAs for ccTLD Delegation and Transfer Requests

The ccNSO and GNSO councils recently approved amendments to the SLAs governing ccTLD delegation and transfer requests. These changes were jointly recommended by PTI and the CSC to provide a more accurate measure for time spent by staff on processing the request and interacting with the customer to request supporting documentation. PTI is now working on implementing the newly created SLAs in our measurement tools and we expect to begin reporting on them soon.

Performance

The IANA team has been performing its functions remotely since early March, making rapid adjustments to its work processes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are pleased to report that despite these trying conditions, the team has successfully achieved 100% fulfilment of all of the SLAs since February 2020. We believe we can continue to sustain reliable delivery of the core IANA services for the foreseeable future despite these limitations.

Customer satisfaction

We continue to gauge customer satisfaction by sending a short survey after the completion of many types of IANA requests. We follow up the customer on each negative response in order to understand what we could have done better. Customer satisfaction numbers for March through May 2020 for the Naming function are as follows:

	March 2020	April 2020	May 2020
Satisfaction Rate	95.5%	88.9%	90%
Response Rate	45.8%	40%	48.8%

System evolution

We continue a steady pace of development of our systems within our team, largely focused on implementing modern platforms. The tools we use to deliver the IANA functions date back around 20 years, and while they continue to perform their job, they limit us in ways we'd like to improve our service into the future.

Of particular interest to ccTLD managers is our Root Zone Management System (RZMS). Our development team has comprehensively rewritten this system to make it more modular and adaptable. We are now in the process of building the user interface and testing the business model thoroughly as we get toward the end of the development phase.

While the focus is on creating a platform for future evolution, we do anticipate adding new functionality in the next release that we think will address the key challenges we see interacting with our customers. These include API access to perform bulk operations, and a more flexible authorization model.

As we continue this work, we are confronted with opportunities to rethink how we do certain aspects of our processing. One area we are simplifying is the process of authorizing changes to nameservers shared by more than one TLD. Today, every impacted TLD is required to consent to such changes, and this means it can be a long drawn out process. In our new model we expect to give a fixed window for impacted TLDs to reject a change, but so long as it passes technical tests and is properly authorized by the TLD manager that submitted the request, the change would proceed.

One area that warrants more significant consideration is IANA's role in performing technical checks of the nameserver configurations. We perform a modest set of technical tests to check for common errors as part of our request process for the root zone. Currently we perform the same tests on the entire nameserver configuration any time we receive any change to the NS and DS records, regardless of the details of the change. Separately, we perform basic tests on RDAP servers, WHOIS servers and URLs, but only when these fields are changed in a change request.

As we evolve, it seems appropriate to revisit when we should be performing technical checks. Should IANA comprehensively perform technical tests for each request? Should it be limited to the elements being proposed for change? Historically, identifying problems in a TLD's technical configuration has allowed the TLD manager to become aware of otherwise unknown issues for correction, even if it is not the component being proposed for change. The downside is this may block proceeding with a change for an unrelated issue. We believe it is important for the issues identified to be corrected in a timely manner, but is blocking a change request the right approach? Should IANA, for example,

perform regular testing of all TLDs and proactively notify of issues independent of the change request process as an alternative?

We would appreciate any thoughts you may have on the potential evolution of our approach. We also expect to start discussions in other forums to gather inputs.

Key ceremonies

The biggest operational challenge we have faced in the past few months was convening our key signing ceremonies. The way we conduct these ceremonies is heavily reliant on international travel by design, as the necessary participants are distributed around the world. After thorough analysis and outreach, we successfully held a ceremony in April with minimum attendance, with adjustments to allow for thorough remote participation. We also made special provisions to generate nine months of cryptographic material at the ceremony which means we do not need to hold another ceremony until 2021.

While the ceremony was a success, COVID-19 raises long term questions about the fitness of the current model. In the future we anticipate discussions in the community about the evolution of our approach to make it more resilient to the new reality, and will fit in well with other areas of investigation we had already flagged — such as whether the current locations of the key management facilities should be modified.

Contacting staff

At ICANN meetings we typically engage with many customers on a one-on-one basis to discuss topics that are of interest to them. With ICANN68 being another virtual meeting, we regret that we cannot do that and would like to remind everyone that we are still available online, and we can host video or phone conferences to have a conversation. Please email us at root-mgmt@iana.org if you have questions or would like to set up a meeting.

Board updates

The current composition of the PTI Board of Directors is Wei Wang, Lise Fuhr, David Conrad, Jia-Rong Low and Kim Davies. Wei Wang's seat is appointed by the Nominating Committee and the term ends this year. This year's Nomcom will make a determination on filling that seat for its next three-year term and is scheduled to announce its appointments in August.